The Winning of the Transcontinental.

By William McLeod Paine

As Jim Messiter walked down River Front avenue and tasted the salt chinook which swept across the bay and mingled with the odor of the new-sawn fir it struck him with a sharp glow of pleasure that life had never before held so much of interest for him. He looked over the town which he had done so much to make and it seemed to him that his work was good. The distinguishing features of the town were its rawness and rustle, but to Jim it had the germ of perfection. Its very newness and crudeness were proof of its vitality and quick life. It was typical of the west—pushing, self-assertive, public-spirited. Fortunes were to be made and lost in a month. Already it was almost cosmopolitan in its citizens, and it was just six months old.

Surely Messiter liked the town no less because it liked him. He had deserved well of the town, had pushed it insistently in season and out of season, and had stood by it manfully when the rival "city" across the bay had been backed by a certain coast railroad company and had almost beaten Willapa Bend out of existence. He had been the spokesman of the delegation which had waited on the president and board of directors of the great Transcontinental railroad to show them why Willapa Bend should be the terminus of their line, and he had done his work so well that he had shaken the president's already formed verdict in favor of Inverness. When the committee filed into the room Willapa Bend had not one chance in a thousand, but before they left Messiter knew that the matter would not be decided without a more thorough investigation.

The town was still in the midst of its first "boom," but every man, woman and child there took pride in it, and believed loyally that the town was to be a big city in the near future. Men were pushing to and fro quietly, buying and selling in a businesslike way. Not a man who was not busy; not one who did not believe he was on the high road to fortune; everywhere rustle, life and hope; a new country in the making. At least that was how Messiter saw it as he turned into the offices of the company, and his opinion went for a good deal among people who knew him.

He was a well-set up young fellow, and worth a second look, not because he was pretty or handsome—for he was neither. His mouth was too large and his features were altogether too irregular. The thing that impressed a stranger was his clean-blooded vitality. He showed alertness and vigor in every movement of his healthy, athletic body. There was something about the lines of his mouth and the expression of his shrewd, humorous eyes that showed determination and fertility of resource.

On his desk were a dozen letters from people in the east who wanted to know all about Willapa Bend. But Jim Messiter tossed these aside and settled himself expectantly to read a letter in a square envelope bearing the monogram "E. D." on the seal. One paragraph he read over several times. Like its writer, it was as direct and frank as a man:

"If I seem to put the case brutally, you will pardon me, and will remember that you have insisted on my speaking frankly. I do not see how the situation has changed since I answered you before. I cannot help feeling that you deliberately ran away from your responsibilities and duties when you buried yourself in the west. You had an honorable career awaiting you here, and you threw it up to go wandering. I do not see any reason to modify my previous judgment in regard to your present course. Leaving out entirely the morality of it, speculating in 'boom' towns cannot be regarded as a serious business in life, worthy of a man who has the opportunities that you have had and still have. So far as I can judge, your philosophy of life seems to be about the same that it used to be when you were at college, and then you regarded it as a huge joke.

"Believe me, I do not intend to hurt you needlessly, but frankness is better for us both, as you say. Unless you can convince me that you are honestly and seriously grappling with the work of life, my resolution must remain unchanged. If you can show me I am mistaken, none of your friends will be so quick to rejoice with you as I. Sincerely,

"EDITH DELAFIELD."

Messiter strolled to the door, an anxious, harassed look on his square-jawed, boyish face. Again his eye wandered over the place, and again it seemed to him that he was doing something worth while. He was in the thick of life—in the heart of a big thing, he admitted to himself impartially, with an air of satisfaction. He had got to make Edith see it in that way, even if he had to go to New York to do so.

He sat down at his desk and wrote an immediate answer. First he told her of what he was doing and of the busy life around him. In conclusion he wrote:

"I certainly am not 'booming' this town for the money there is to be made in fleecing innocent buyers. You know me better than that. To open up a new and rich country is a more serviceable work in my opinion. The country out here is rough and raw, but it contains wonderful possibilities, and I do not think that the pioneers who are giving themselves to its development can be said to be skulkers in life's battle. I believe in this country and this town. I intend to stay here, and I am not trying to induce working people to invest their money in what I know to be a cheat and a lie.

"I cannot hope to make you feel about this as I who am in the thick of it do; but if you could see the progress we have made, the tide flats that have been reclaimed, the forests that have been cleared and the homes that are being built, I feel sure that you would not think it useless and futile.

"I have been asked to stand for the state senate. For the next week we shall be straining every nerve to get the terminus of the Transcontinental for our town. Whatever else I am doing, I am not trifling. It is the work I am best fitted for. Yet if I do not get one little girl in New York to believe in it and me—

"You have got to believe in me and the town, for we are both tremendously in earnest. I cannot leave my work now, but may I not come later, say next month? May I not, dear? JAMES MESSITER."

He was just finishing the address when two visitors dropped into the office. One of them was the man who wanted to be governor. He introduced his companion as "Mr. Roberts, looking for a site for some mills. Thought he ought to see your town, Mr. Messiter."

"It's the only town he needs to see. A lumberman has a better chance here than in any other place in the state, and that means in the world," retorted Messiter, promptly, and as a matter of course.

Presently, as they bowled over the planked roads in a surrey, Messiter found himself reeling out by the yard facts, figures and prophecies as to the town and surrounding country. The politician occasionally helped him out with a remark, for he wanted Messiter's help at the coming convention but the mill owner smoked his cigar stolidly, except for an occasionally sharp, pertinent question.

"I tell you, sir, this town is bound to grow; nothing can keep it back. The proposition is just this: we have practically the only good harbor between 'Frisco and Puget Sound. No, sir, Portland isn't in it as a seaport town. Then we tap one of the richest lumber districts in the world—and practically untouched. The lumber is easy of access and can be floated down the river. You saw it right on the water's edge, load it from you own wharves and send it all over the world. The supply of lumber is practically unlimited, too. I don't need to talk to you about the salmon industry or our farming resources, because they talk for themselves. And the climate—"

"I am not coming for my health," laughed Roberts. Then he flicked the ashes from his cigar and said tentatively: "I think of locating at Inverness."

"Inverness! Well, if you're looking for a quiet, healthful sort of sanitarium, that's the place for you. It's dead—dead and buried. The only live thing they have there are mills and promoters."

Roberts eyed him with an amused smile and he said slowly, "Willapa end's got a few promoters, too."

Messiter laughed quietly at the hit. "Oh, yes, I'm a promoter all right; but it happens I've got something to promote. This town will be a city of 50,000 inhabitants in five years. I may be a promoter, but I am the kind that means to stay by the town."

"Six months ago this town consisted of one lone cabin and a cowpath leading to it through the timber. That was the whole outfit. You see it now—two sawmills, canning factory, $10,000 school projected, $100,000 hotel being built, lots anywhere from 200 to 1,000 apiece. If we can do that in six months, what can we do in ten years?"

"Well, I confess I like the outlook. I believe you'll make a town out of it. But I want to go slow. I've seen boom towns before."

"I hope you are not going to liken us to those mushroom prairie towns on the rainless desert. This Washington immigration movement has come to stay. We've got here the finest country on the face of God's green earth, and people have just begun to find it out. I think Willapa Bend and Seattle are going to be the cities on the northern coast. It takes two things to make a town—one is natural advantages and the other is git-up-and-git, and we have got them both."

They were back in the office by this time, and the president of the Willapa Bend Land & Development company leaned forward persuasively and touched the other man's knee with his lead pencil.

"See here, Mr. Roberts, I don't usually talk about private affairs, but I'll tell you one thing; our company has taken in more than $1,200 a day this summer on an average—in cash, that is."

"That's more apt to mean inflated values than legitimate development. I'd rather hear that the Transcontinental was coming this way."

The two men looked at each other for a moment, and both smiled a little. They had got to the controlling lever at last. President Eaton of the Transcontinental was married to a sister of Roberts, and it was beyond doubt that the latter would locate in the town selected by the railroad company for its terminus. What Messiter hoped for was that the mill owner would be impressed with the advantages of Willapa Bend and throw the weight of his influence in favor of that town. Presently Messiter asked boldly: "Which way is the Transcontinental going?"

"I don't think the matter is officially decided," answered Roberts cautiously, "but I guess Inverness has it pretty well corralled."

Messiter knew quite well that at present Inverness was a better town than Willapa Bend. It was a larger, older town, and to the Michigan man, fresh from the neat towns of his own state, presented a much more attractive appearance that Willapa Bend, rich in charred stumps and blackened hillsides where the forest fires had run not three months before. But Messiter say it with the eyes of faith, and he meant that the other man should also see it so.

"Inverness is an older town than this and it looks a good deal prettier just now. It's getting past the stump age. They are getting the timber cleared out of there pretty fast. But that isn't what you want, I take it. You are after a place that has a big stumpage yet."

The Michigan man smiled a little in appreciation of the pun, and said, "There's lots of timber 'round Inverness yet."

"Yes, there is a lot of timber there, but there are a dozen big mills, and they either own or have an option on the most desirable timber lands. If you go there, you take your chances, and they won't be of the best, because you are the last in the field."

It was Messiter's one valid point, and he knew it had scored. The mill man smoked in silence for a minute before he spoke again. "And if I come here?"

"If you come here you are practically first in the field. I don't count these two mills already here, because they are small, single-barreled affairs, running without much capital. There is plenty of timber all 'round here. What's the matter with your sending agents out to buy up big quantities of the most desirable land? You can get it almost at your own price now."

Messiter waited for the other to speak, but as he did not appear to intend to make a beginning, Jim continued:

"There is a lot of timber yet in the Sound country, but they have to go back from salt water to get it now. You will not find a place on earth where timber is handier than here. Assuming that we get the Transcontinental"—Roberts smiled at the calmness with which Messiter assumed the point at issue—"the bulk of your carrying will be done by water on account of the saving in expense. If ships from Sydney and Calcutta can drop in here and get their lumber, it does not stand to reason that they will try to make the difficult straits passage into Puget Sound. Those tramp schooners aren't taking extra risks for the pleasure there is in adventure."

Again the president of the W. B. L. & D. company had scored a hit, and when Roberts left for Seattle a few days later Messiter knew that what influence the mill man had with his brother-in-law would be exerted in favor of Willapa Bend, but that whichever town was selected by the railroad company for its terminus would also be the town to get the large mills of the Michigan man.

It was two or three days later that Jim got his answer from New York. It bade him come to her after he had secured the Transcontinental for his town.

"Guess I bragged too much about what I was doing," reflected Jim with a grin, "but I've got to get the railroad now if I have to hold up the president for it."

When Messiter got the telegram in cipher from Chicago announcing the departure of President Eaton for Inverness, he tossed it over to his partner with the remark: "Gay outlook, isn't it?"

"I should remark. Lets us out good and plenty," answered Barry after he had read it.

Messiter sat drumming with his fingers on the desk in front of him, a thoughtful frown on his abstracted face. He knew very well that if Inverness got hold of the president first it would be all up with his chances. At all cost Eaton must be kept away from Inverness for a time. He thought about it quite a while, and the immediate result of his thinking was that he rose with a smile on his face, and said easily: "Oh, I don't know. We'll see about that."

There had been heavy rains in western Washington for weeks, and temporary, but vicious rivers were running all over the land seeking what they could devour. It was one of these that ditched the express. Still, it is a little strange that the track had held for miles against a heavy pressure and should finally be swept away by a stream not six inches deep nor ten feet wide.

President Eaton felt the train slow down. Then it stopped with a jar that sent him forward heavily against the chair in front of him. He looked out of the window, and saw the train hands gathered round the engine. He divined at once that there had been a washout, and strolled forward to see the extent of the damage. The engineer was explaining excitedly how it had happened. "I slowed down pretty slow at the curve here knowin' there was a bad place jest this side. Soon as I got round, I seen there was a washout, and threw on the emergency brakes, but the' wa'ant time to stop, and we waltzed right in."

The damage was very slight, but it would be impossible to proceed for many hours. The railroad magnate did not view with particular equanimity the prospect of a long wait in the dreary forest. At this opportune moment Jim Messiter and his surrey came in sight. The engineer saw him first, and deliberately winked at Jim.

"Most harmless accident you ever saw, Mr. Messiter," suggested the conductor with a grin.

Messiter was, of course, surprised to meet Mr. Easton, but had a way to suggest out of the difficulty. "Jump into my surrey, Mr. Easton, and I'll take you to Willapa Bend. You can look over our town and tomorrow I'll take you across the bay to Inverness in my launch."

The railroad president reflected that this would save him from making a special trip to Willapa Bend. He could take it in on his way to Inverness, and then he could tell Roberts that he had seen the town.

Messiter had plenty of time to size up his man before they reached town. During the past few weeks he had omitted no opportunity to find out all he could about the man who held the fate of Willapa Bend in hand. As a result of his inquiries he had learned that Eaton was a quiet, reserved man, who hated above all things fuss and pompous display. He dressed quietly, but well, and liked a good dinner as well as most men, though he sometimes suffered from it afterward.

Messiter drove straight to the office, where Barry met him and insisted on their dining with him. Mrs. Barry was a housekeeper among a thousand, but that day she fairly outdid herself. Eaton admitted to himself that a town six months old able to furnish an impromptu dinner like the one he was eating wasn't so far out the world after all.

After dinner Barry and Messiter took him round to the club, and again the railroad man opened his eyes. The appointments and service were in excellent taste and the few men he met were altogether different from the men he had expected to meet. Presently he found himself at whist with three men who knew the game as well as he did himself. They attended strictly to their game, and seemed to have forgotten that there was such a railroad in existence as the Transcontinental. He was very fond of whist, and it was a genuine pleasure to meet people in this dropping-off place who knew enough to play by rule.

Messiter's fine hand was in evidence throughout the evening. Of the dozen men who knew that the president of the Transcontinental was in town, not one of them mentioned the town except incidentally, and then not by way of business. One of them grumbled about it to Heaton of the Journal: "Seems to me we're losing valuable time. We ought to talk the town up when we have the chance," he said.

"Jim Messiter is running this show. He'll pull us through if anybody can, I guess. All we have to do is to take our cue and play up to him."

When Eaton left with Messiter in the launch next day he was surprised to find that he left the town with some regret. Instead of the anticipated bore, his visit had been quite a pleasure.

The rain began about the time the launch reached Inverness, and continued in torrents for several days. Eaton and Messiter put up at the nearest hotel, where the rain kept them pretty close prisoners. The cooking was wretched, and at the end of the second day Eaton was suffering badly from dyspepsia.

About this time the mayor of Inverness, a large, effusive man with a bad manner, who had been haunting the depot for a day or two in a vain search for Mr. Eaton, discovered their presence at the hotel. Without the knowledge of the railroad president, he ordained for him a public reception. The railroad owner was dragged off to meet a few friends, and three hours later found himself still limply shaking hands with men he never expected to meet again and listening to inane banalities.

The mayor of Inverness believed he was making an impression. He certainly made one at the close of the reception, when he attempted a confidential whisper and trod heavily on Eaton's gouty toe. Messiter, in a far corner, smiled blandly, and repeated to himself softly, "He's digging a grave—he's digging a grave—and I think Inverness is going to be the corpse."

As President Eaton after a wretched night's rest, looked out of the hotel window at the rain still streaming down, he contrasted the pleasure he had had at Willapa Bend with the dismalness of Inverness and the thoroughly disagreeable experience the place had given him. He felt he could not stand the place another hour. Suddenly he turned to Messiter and announced his intention of leaving that morning for Chicago. The young man asked when he might expect to hear what the decision of the company was in regard to the terminus.

"You can hear now," answered the president abruptly. Then he asked quickly: "How about a bridge across the Willapapa, if we run in from the north—will you guarantee to raise the money from the town?"

"Yes, sir—if I pay every cent myself."

"You will give us a right of way into your town, and plenty of room for yards and shops?" he asked sharply.

"All the room you want."

"And a good site for an ocean wharf?"

"Wherever you want it."

"Then, Mr. Messiter, the terminus of the Transcontinental is yours."

The room grew altogether too small for Messiter. He wanted to hug his portly vis-a-vis, he had a desire to improvise the Highland fling, with variations he bethought him of his college yell, and wondered what Eaton would think if he were to let out a "Hi-O-Hi!" He did none of these things. He waited a moment till his voice was under control, then said quietly: "We'll try to be worthy of the chance you have given us."

Half an hour later two telegrams went over the wires from Messiter. The one to arry was in cipher, but interpreted it read:

"Willapa Bend gets the Transcontinental. Letter follows. Wake things up tonight. JIM."

The other was to New York. To the girl who opened it the message said:

"I hand you the Transcontinental on a silver platter with my best bow. Start east tonight. J. M."

Home Run Haggerty

Tells of Advantages and Disadvantages of the Gold Canyon Ball Grounds.

BY GEORGE WILLIAM DALEY

"IT WAS just after we had left Silversand, the place where the atmosphere was so heavy it resisted the ball, that Pete Brown remarked that the adventures we'd had on the trip rather laid over anything that even the famous Alfalfas had ever done before, and the bunch all agreed with him.

"We hit the pike away from Silversand in some of a hurry. We had their money, you know, an' they had the pleasant memories of our visit, and there wasn't any tellin' at what minute the enraged populace might come after us with a long rope. So, as I said, we loped along. Long about 2 in the afternoon we came to an old feller with long whiskers at the side o' the road and he hailed us.

"'Ball players, eh?' says he, takin' his pipe out of his mouth. 'Fine lookin' lot o' ball players you are.'

"'Well!' says Josh, takin' a careful look at the bunch, 'I don't see no signs on us announcin' that we are grass eaters. How'd you know?'

"'The guys from up Silversand way passed the word along,' says the old man. 'They don't want you to git out o' the country without bein' trimmed. That's why I'm here. The Gold Canyon boys sent me down to invite you to come up an' play a game.'

"Just then Pinch Hobbs began to laugh. "'Why, don't you remember the Little Gingerbread Boy?' says Pinch. 'Well do I recollect my gran'ther,

Ha, Ha, Ha! Went Pinch Holdin' His Sides An' Shakin' His Red Head.

Nathanael Green Hobbs, settin' with me on his lap tellin' that pathetic tale. "I've run away f'm a barnful o' thrashers," he'd say—an' here Pinch took another conniption an' laughed, an' laughed.

"'Oh, come on,' says the little old man f'm Gold Canyon. 'Leave him there an' let's be gettin' to the ball game.'

"We looked at him. Leave Pinch Hobbs, the greatest shortstop that ever lived, wrigglin' with laughter at the roadside and go to a ball game! The old feller wilted, and we all sat down to wait till the great man recovered—which he presently did—and sat up. Then he looked at Josh an' says:

"'Don't go, Josh,' says he. 'On my bended knees I implore you, don't go.'

"'For why not?' says Josh.

"'Didn't you never hear o' the Little Gingerbread Boy?' says Pinch.

"'Yes, but what in thunder has that got to do with us playin' ball in Gold Canyon?' sings out Josh, spiteful.

"'A hull lot,' says Pinch. 'Don't you remember where he comes up with the fox and he says, "I've run away f'm a barnful o' thrashers, 'n a fieldful o' mowers, 'n a cow, an' a pig, an' a little old woman, an' a little old man, an' I c'n run away from you, I can?" Don't you remember that?'

"We all nodded, an' I felt more mystified than ever. What was Pinch comin' to? Had his great brain give way under the weight of his schemes?

"'Well, then, I tell you,' says he, 'that you had better beware. We've got away with a minefull o' yeller Chinks, an' a townfull o' onmerciful swatters in Crucible, an' the crowd in Silversand an' vicinity,' says he. 'But this Gold Canyon bunch—look out! Look out, or you'll be sayin', like the Little Gingerbread Boy did, "I'm quarter gone, I'm half gone, I'm three-quarters gone, I'm all gone," when the fox swallered him. Look out for the Gold Canyonites or they'll get you.'

"At that the little old man f'm up Gold Canyon way strid over an' shook Pinch warmly by the hand.

"'Young feller,' says he, 'I admire you,' says he. 'An' still, at the same time, I don't want your compliments o' the Gold Canyon nine, which is the strongest in four states and forty-leven counties, to scare your nine out o' playin' us.'

"Well, after that wild horses wouldn't a-kept us away f'm Gold Canyon. 'You got to show us,' says Josh to the little old man, and he had him lead the way. An' we brought along Finch, though now he was shakin' his head an' melancholy instead o' loughin'.

"A wilder country you never saw than that we traveled through that day and night. About 12 o'clock midnight we struck Gold Canyon and went to bed, and before we was up the next morning, long about 8 o'clock, there was a thump on our door, an' in prances Sam Merritt. An' he had a breathless story to tell.

"'Pass it up!' says he. 'Josh has jest gone down to the tavern an' he's bettin' his head off to back us, an' I just been up to the ball grounds—an' that's about all. Them ball grounds!'

"'What's the matter with 'em?' says I. 'Ain't they fenced in?'

"'Naw!' snarls Sam. 'No fences, no nuthin'. At the home plate it's level. Then it's uphill goin' to first, an' more uphill goin' to second, an' a steep upgrade goin' to third, an' you have to climb on your hands an' knees to git up home. The outfield—'

"'Break away!' says I. 'How in jumpin' blazes can you have it uphill all the way 'round. Don't you know that's impossible?'

"'Nuthin' impossible out here,' says Sam. 'It's the way the country's put together. As I was sayin', there is two large gulleys an' a ravine in the left field, a yawning chasm in center fer me to negotiate, an' a high hill fer Billings in right. A balloon's about the thing fer him. When Hennery gits in deep left he won't be able to see the sky—you see, it is deep.'

"'Good gosh!' says I. 'Ain't you exaggeratin', Sam?'

"'Exaggerate nuthin',' says Sam. 'The half ain't never yet been told. A thorn apple tree throws its invitin' shade over first base, an' there is a spring o' water, clear an' undefiled, near second. Backin' up third base is a big hole in the rock that looks like there was wild cats in it. If Jim Harrison goes in there on his hands and knees after a wild throw he'll find out. Last but not least, the pitcher's box is all ant hills, an' f'm second to third base, the shortstop's position, there's a fine expanse o' blackberry bushes an' Canada thistles.'

"Jest then Pinch woke up, looked wildly about, an' says, 'We're quarter gone,' an' sank back to snooze again. I follered Sam downstairs, an' we found Josh. He was cursin' the Gold Canyon manager up hill an' down dale, an' the other feller was guyin' him back for tryin' to quit. You see, Josh had just had a glimpse o' the grounds and wanted his money back.

"'They wouldn't do that, and kept joshin' an' shamin' us an' laughin', till finally Josh went to Reggie an' says:

"'Reg, d'ye think it'd be possible to fan twenty-seven o' these guys?'

"'You mean,' says Reg, 'to put the kibosh on 'em so nobody hits it out into that utterly wretched field?'

"'Exactly,' says Josh. 'It's our only chance. Any hit out there would be a honie run, in among them hills and valleys. You've got to hand 'em the strike-out box.'

"So the game started. Reg was good, and his wide curves kep' 'em guessing, till the third inning. Then he passed a Gold Canyonite to first, an' hit another. A drive into the blackberry bushes in front o' Pinch put three on base. The next batter drove out a liner that hit a rock in front o' second, bounced back into Reg's hands, and we got the guy runnin 'home.

"'Hard luck,' hollered the Gold Canyon rooters, an' the rocky ravines and avalanches out in center an' right and left seemed to echo back, 'Hard luck.'

"We weren't so lucky on the next. A bounder went to Johnny Harrison at second. Just as he got set it bounced wrong and went into the spring o' water, an' by the time he got it out two runs had gone in. A pop fly to Pete Brown and a liner to Pinch ended the inning.

"'Hag,' says Reg, as he comes runnin' in, 'if somethin' ain't done to stop them blamed ants f'm bitin' me I'll never git another strikeout.'

"That was what was the matter with the great pitcher, and who could blame him? I fixed him by paintin' a band o' vaseline f'm the medicine chest around his legs just over his shoe tops to ketch 'em as they crawled up. Then he did all right.

"'Yes,' says the Gold Canyon manager to Josh as one of his men chased up on a cliff an' pulled in a liner f'm Hennessy's bat. 'We believe in havin' natural obstacles in this here game o' baseball. It makes it interestin'. A jumpin' race, where they go over bushes an' hedges an' stone walls on the water jump, is a turn lot more excitin' than a flat race, where just mere speed wins. Now, our ball players is like steeple chasers—no natural obstacles fazes 'em for a minute.'

"'Wait till Hag gits mad,' says Josh. 'He'll give you somethin' that'll faze you.'

With That Poor Innocent Baseball In His Mouth.

"Well, things went along smooth till the seventh, an' then, not wantin' us to be behind all the time, I seized the chance when Sam Merritt an' Brownie was on the bags to line one out to the hill in right. The fielder couldn't reach it. It described one o' them paregoric curves like I hammered into the bee's nest, an' biff!

"There was a loud report f'm out in center, an' then a cloud o' smoke riz up, an' out o' the top o' the smoke we made out the fielder goin' flip-floppin' up an' up. He came crashin' down into a tree an' was made comfortable in a nearby house.

"Meantime Sam an' Brownie an' me had scored, puttin' us ahead. We asked what the explosion was.

"'Oh, some durn fool left a stick o' dynamite up there an' your drive found it,' says the manager. 'A durn good rap it was, but you can't do it again.'

"They tied us in the next innin'. Pinch went after a liner, stumbled an' when the ball hit him he went down and out. When he come to he says:

"'Oh, I'm three-quarters gone!' an' fainted again.

"'That durn Gingerbread Boy again,' says Josh. 'What'll we do now?'

"We fixed things by puttin' Lamp Hymes at third and Jim Harrison at short. Then we went on for six weary, hard-fought innings.

"Hennessy made a homer in the thirteenth off a lost ball, an' they tied

An Out O' the Top O' the Smoke We Made Out the Fielder Goin' Flip-Floppin' Up an' Up.

it on a series o' wild throws. In our half o' the fourteenth I set my teeth. I remembered what Sam had said about the hole back o' third, an' when a low out came sailin' in I screwed around on it and drew it in for all I was worth.

"As I dug for first I seen the Gold Canyon third baseman diving into the hole, an' then there came the most terrible roar you ever heard and he came tumblin' out again. As I sailed past third, only touchin' the high places, I seen the biggest grizzly you ever seen a lookin' out o' that hole, with that poor innocent baseball in his mouth.

"'One o' the natural advantages,' says Josh as I scored.

"Reg struck 'em out in their half, an' we won. An' then Josh says to the Gold Canyon manager:

"'This here business o' havin' natural obstacles on a ball ground is all right,' says he, 'but it's kind o' rough when they break against the home team,' says he. 'Now a natural obstacle like that bear had ought to be taught to field back the balls the home team wants, an' hang on to what the other side wants. Then you'd stand a show o' winnin'.'

"That's all. That's one time that Pinch didn't call the turn with his guesses. He never heard the last o' that Gingerbread story."

JIMMY BEAR AND HIS VISITORS.

BY ERNEST HAROLD BAYNES

THERE may be some one within a radius of twenty miles from my home who does not know of Jimmy, the bear cub, but I doubt it. And almost everyone who knows of him considers it a duty to call on him to pay their respects, so they walk in and drive in from all points of the compass, and Jimmy receives them all with delight, condescension, indifference or unfeigned disgust, according to his mood at the time, or, in other words, according to the length of time which has elapsed since his last meal.

Last Sunday, over thirty carriage loads of people unloaded themselves on my premises during the day, and as many more came on foot. None of them were friends of mine, and not one of them even asked for me. They were all Jimmy's visitors, and, as Jimmy was there to entertain them himself, all I had to do was to sit at an upper window and watch the fun. Among the first to arrive was a lady with a little child about two years old. Jimmy was lying quietly on the lawn, chewing clover, and did not rise to greet them.

"See, darling! See the pretty baby bear!" said the lady, advancing confidently, and letting go of the youngster's hand. "Baby, pat the pretty bear," and without hesitation, the little one advanced, and patted the bear on the head. Jimmy took this familiarity as an invitation to wrestle, and promptly but gravely arose on his hind legs and clasped the baby in his sturdy arms. The frightened youngster screamed and fell over backwards, and Jimmy, letting go his hold, stood quite erect, and eyed his supposed antagonist as though greatly surprised at the sudden termination of the contest. In the meantime, the mother, thoroughly scared, snatched the child up in her arms, and drove off with a remark not altogether complimentary to owners of bear cubs. She was learning the folly of taking liberties with animals while knowing nothing whatever of their habits, strength and disposition. She would be more careful next time, perhaps.

She had scarcely gone when a man drove up, and Jimmy went out to meet him. Under the wagon was a well bred collie, who, in some respects, showed better sence than the lady had done. He knew nothing of bears, and, while not cowardly, edged away from Jimmy, until he had had a chance to "size him up." Jimmy followed him with an assurance born of inexperience, until the man, who wanted a nearer view of the cub, stepped out of the wagon. Whether the sheep dog had completed his investigation, or whether the close proximity of his master increased his confidence in himself, I can't tell, but the man's foot had barely touched the ground before the collie sprang forward and caught the young bear by the nose. Jimmy, having received the same lesson he had just administered to the lady, acted in practically the same way. That is, he moved with all haste away from the object of danger, with a series of uncomplimentary remarks, in his own language of course. He ran underneath the piazza to rub his sore nose with his fore paws, and, although he soon came out again, nothing could induce him to approach the dog again.

In the course of the morning, another dog arrived—a big, good natured fellow, of no particular breed, black and tan in color, and with a pair of eyes and a tail which seemed to vie with one another in appearing pleased and happy. He and Jimmy looked at one another for a moment, and, as though mutual confidence was established on the instant, they strolled slowly up to each other. Then began a friendly contest which lasted for fully half an hour, and which amused a score of people who gathered about to witness it. Jimmy was the heavier, but the dog was the more active, so, take it altogether, they were very evenly matched. At times they would stand upon their hind legs and wrestle like men, but soon they would fall over on the grass, and roll about, each trying to get the other underneath. The dog, not being so fat, had the better wind, and now and then the bear would seek a rest by running up a tree. But each time the dog was after him, and, before he could climb out of reach, seized the cub by the hind quarters and brought him tumbling down again.

One of the next men who came had with him a basket of apples, and, thinking to make frieds with Jimmy, held out the backet towards him. As the cub approached, the man withdrew the fruit, but with an indignant "waugh," a black paw shot out and the strong claws were hooked over the rim of the basket. In the struggle which followed, half the apples were tipped on to the lawn, and after Jimmy had settled down with a fine ripe one between his paws, he allowed the man to gather up the others.

In this attitude toward his different visitors, the young bear seemed to use some judgment. If he wished to play and wrestle with anyone, he seldom selected a man usually a woman or child—by preference, it seemed, one who was somewhat afraid of him. He never hurt anyone, but he would jump upon boys and girls and women, wrestle with them, and chew their clothing in a vigorous manner, which was often misunderstood. He picked out one little boy of about 12 years, and embracing him with his fore paws, deliberately tried to pull his coat off with his teeth. The boy stood it for a time, but got more and more nervous as he found himself unable to get away from the bear, and finally burst out crying, and a man who was near went to his assistance. But Jimmy wanted that coat, and whenever he caught sight of the boy he made a rush at him, until the youngster became so alarmed that he went home. Another of Jimmy's victims was a nervous young woman whose curiosity was even greater than her fear of the bear. She was more than plump and Jimmy seemed to take a special fancy to her. She wanted to see everything that was going on, but was constantly on the lookout lest the bear should come too close for comfort. By and by, however, when she saw the cub playing with a group of children at a distance, her vigilance was relaxed, and she turned to talk with some of her friends. Suddenly there was a wild scream, as Jimmy came at full speed from the rear, and struck her like a battering ram, knocking her feet clear from under her. She sat down with surprising suddenness, and Jimmy, having no time to retreat, was caught as in a deadfall trap. I thought for a moment that he had been killed, but a muffled "waugh" announced the fact that he was still alive, and presently he crawled out of the wreck with a rueful look at the plump young woman who had nearly smothered him. And the young woman herself, with a face about the color of beetroot, scrambled to her carriage and drove off without so much as a glance at the author of her discomfort.